

**HISTORY OF THE
COUNCIL BLUFFS COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This document is a reconstruction of the history of education in Council Bluffs. It attempts to describe the establishment of the Board of Education, the construction and naming of school buildings, and the numbers of students served throughout the district's history.

The Mormons played an important part in the establishment of private schools in Council Bluffs, then called Kaneshville. Later private schools were replaced by public schools, making education available to all. The first public school building was built in 1864. Since that time, many school buildings have been built, 18 of which are still in use.

- 1848 The first steps were taken to establish a public school System in Council Bluffs.
- 1849 The people elected the first School Fund Commissioners who were given the power to levy mill taxes for school purposes.
- 1859 The question of organizing the Council Bluffs Independent School District was submitted to the people and approved by a vote of 92-0. Soon after, a seven member Board was elected.
- 1860 Council Bluffs had two elementary schools with four teachers and one high school with two teachers. These schools were conducted in rented rooms.

For some time the people of Council Bluffs felt the need of school buildings. Progress was slow until 1864 when, at a school election, the people approved a two-mill tax levy for the purpose of erecting the first building in Council Bluffs for educational purposes.

1864 The first building constructed was of brick and was erected at Stutsman and Pierce. Since it was in the First Ward it was designated as First Ward School, afterwards known as Stutsman School. Cost was \$6,500. It was later sold.

1866 The Fourth Ward School was completed on the corner of Willow Avenue and 7th Street. In 1880 it was replaced by the first Bloomer School at a cost of \$8,000. As the population grew, the demand for a larger school resulted in the erection of the present Bloomer School which was completed in 1923 at a cost of \$225,000.

Old Washington School was completed on the site which is presently the Telephone Building and Washington School playground. In 1921 it was remodeled, and the offices of the superintendent and secretary of the Board

were added. In 1954 the new Washington School was completed.

1867 Court Street School was built on the corner of Court Street and Cherry (now 15th Street and First Avenue). It was abandoned in 1894.

Franklin Pierce School was constructed at Frank And Thomas streets. It was abandoned and a new Pierce Street School was built in 1884 at the corner Of Pierce and Franklin. In 1950 it was closed and students were transferred to Hoover.

1868 Allen A. Armstrong was appointed as the first Superintendent of Schools.

1869 The office of the County Superintendent was established.

1871 The first high school was built where old Kirn Field is now located on Fifth Avenue just west of Glen. It was named Council Bluffs High School. In 1900 a new high school was constructed on the corner of 5th Avenue and Bluff Street. The name was then changed to Abraham Lincoln High School.

Clark School was erected at Bennett Avenue and Franklin Avenue. Later it was abandoned.

1877 McMillen School was constructed at 16th Street and 8th Avenue. It was abandoned in 1951, and students were transferred to Edison School.

1879 Woodbury School was erected at Woodbury and South Avenue. It was vacated in 1901.

1880 Gunn School was built on the corner of Linden and North Broadway. In 1924 it was replaced with a new building. Addition #1-1954, addition #2-1962, addition #3-1981 (multi-purpose room).

- 1882 Eight Street School was built at Eighth Street and Avenue G. It was later named Tinley School, after Matthew Tinley.
- 1953 New Eighth Street School was constructed, it replaced the school built in 1882. The name was changed to Matthew Tinley. In 1985, the elementary school was closed and the building was used to house the Kaneshville Alternative High School, The Iowa Western Community College GED/ABE General Education Diploma, Adult Basic Education Program, and an Early Childhood Center for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. It is now called the Tinley Learning Center.
- 2005 The Tinley basement was remodeled for Pact students, and the toddlers were removed. It was renamed Kaneshville/Pact.
- 1883 The first Longfellow School was constructed at 20th Avenue and South 10th Street. It consisted of four rooms. Addition #1-1890, Additions #2-1892, Additions#3-1897, Addition #4-1906, Addition #5-1909, Additions #6 – 1917. Even this did not provide enough room, so in 1939 the new Longfellow School was built. The gymnasium was added on 1957.
- 1884 Third Street School was constructed at Third Street and 11th Avenue. Later it was named General Dodge School.
- 1882 Eighth Street School was built at Eighth Street and Avenue G. It was later named Tinley School, after Matthew Tinley. In 1985, the elementary school was closed and the building was used to house the Kaneshville Alternative High School, the Iowa Western Community College GED/ABE General Education Diploma, Adult Basic Education

Program, and an Early Childhood Center for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. It was called the Tinley Learning Center before the preschool was moved.

- 1890 The first Second Avenue School was constructed at 23rd Street and Second Avenue. Addition #1-1902, Addition #2-1918, Addition #3-1938, Addition #4-1952.
- 1891 Harrison School was constructed at Harrison Street and McGee Avenue.
- 1892 Madison School was built at Madison Avenue & Kappell. Addition #1-1930, Addition #2-1956.
- 1893 Thirty-Second Street School was constructed and later named Franklin. New Franklin School was built on Avenue C in 1975.
- 1907 Roosevelt School was constructed on the corner of 17th Street and Avenue E. Addition #1-1913, Addition #2-1925, Addition #3-1952, Addition #4-1966.
- 1908 Oak Street School for primary grades was built at Oak and roadway and was sold in 1950. Students transferred to Hoover in 1951.
- 1921 Thomas Jefferson High School was constructed at 25th Street and West Broadway. Addition #1-1953. Field House, addition #2-1962, shop area, Addition #3-1966, West Wing. (Research and add many more additions/high school improvement projects.) 2005-2006-2007 Cafeteria was relocated and additional classrooms were added.(est.cost \$15.5 million dollars)
- 1924 Rue School was constructed at 33rd Street and 5th Avenue. Addition #1-1951- remodeling 1991

- 1926 Walnut Grove School was constructed at 29th Street and Avenue J. Addition #1 – 1951, Addition #2-1966. Two relocatables were added in 1972-remodeling 1991.
- 1929 Courtland School was built in Carter Lake. The new building was built in 1950. Addition #1 1959, addition #2-1962, Addition #3-1965, Addition #4-1977.
- 1930 Student enrollment 10,210.
- 1939 New Longfellow School was constructed. This was the first new school building built since 1929. Remodeling 1999.
- 1950 Hoover School was constructed on North Broadway. General sessions were held at Hoover. Remodeling 1991.
- 1953 New Eighth Street School was constructed; it replaced the school built in 1882. The name was changed to Matthew Tinley.
- 1951 Edison School built.
- 1954 New Washington School was constructed; it replaced old Washington School of 1866. Remodel-2001 HVAC
- 1957 Pusey School was constructed on 15th Avenue. Addition #1-1975; Addition #2-1981.
- 1957 Deforest School was constructed at 29th Street and 9th Avenue. Addition #1-1981.
- Lewis & Clark School was constructed on Grand Avenue, Addition #1-1962; addition #2-1975; Addition #3-1981. – remodeled 1999

Peterson School was constructed at 26th Avenue and south 9th street.

Myers School was constructed at 37th Street and Avenue G.

1958 Crescent School was constructed in Crescent, Iowa. Addition #1-1966. It merged with Council Bluffs School by mandate of the State Legislature and vote of the residents in 1966. – fire 2006

1960 New Abraham Lincoln High School was constructed on Bonham Avenue. Addition #1-1962; Addition #2-1966. It was originally Eastside Junior high, housed hundreds of junior high students.

1961 Lake school was built on North Broadway.

Woodrow Wilson Junior High School was built at Avenue H and 21st Street. Two relocatables were added in 1975.

1965 Council Bluffs Stadium was built.

1966 Glendale (Garner), Sunnydale, Lake (North Broadway), Carter Lake and Crescent merged with the Council Bluffs School District by mandate of the State Legislature and vote of the residents. Lewis Central declined and built their own high school.)

1972 Career Center was constructed on North 18th Street. It was later named the Harmon Tucker Vocational Education Center. It also housed the Alternative High School in the North Corner. Remodeled 2006 Academy

1974-75 Student enrollment at 13,765.

- 1974-75 School closings: Dodge, Harrison, Avenue B, Sunnydale and Lake.
- 1979 New Kirn Junior High School was constructed on North Avenue.
- 1981 The district added multi-purpose rooms (to serve as cafeterias, gymnasiums and meeting space to the following elementary buildings: ?? Gunn,
- 1984 Thomas Jefferson/Abraham Lincoln High Schools building programs are now under way for completion in August of 1985. Added space to accommodate 9th grade in the high schools.
- 1984-85 Student enrollment at 9,896.
- 1985 Moved all ninth grade students to Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson High Schools. All 7th and 8th grade students were moved to Wilson and Kirn Junior High Schools, eliminating the need for Junior High Classes at Longfellow, Edison, and Bloomer Schools.
- 1986 Closed five elementary schools- Peterson, Deforest, Myers, Tinley and Madison.
- 1991 Elementary School Improvement Program. Phase I (ESIP I) Projects completed. New media centers and Early Childhood Center were added to Bloomer, Hoover, Rue and Walnut Grove Elementary Schools.
- 1994-95 Student enrollment at 10,153.
- 1996 Passed \$14.5 million bond issue
- 2001 Passed Pottawattamie County Local Option Sales Tax to fund infrastructure improvements.

- 2008 Crescent Elementary re-opened after an arsonist nearly destroyed the building in July of 2006. The newly renovated and expanded school features an updated and beautiful learning environment filled with amenities for students, staff and community members. It will serve 120 students in grades K-6 during the 2008-09 school year, with room for growth in enrollment. The \$1.9 million renovation includes:
- * a full size gymnasium with p.e. storage and office as well as adult restrooms in that addition for use after school hours by persons using the gymnasium;
 - * a computer lab/library combination room;
 - * an improved administrative office to include adult restrooms, a room for parent meetings, a space for student health services and a teacher mailbox area; and
 - * a renovated teacher workroom and academic materials storage space in the school's basement.
- The portable previously used for the library will no longer be utilized.
- 2009 State Legislature made local option sales tax a Statewide Sales tax for a 20-year duration to expire in 2029. District's can borrow ahead (bond against) the future revenue to fund projects. Voters approved a Revenue Purpose Statement to allow the District to use the funds for any purpose allowed under the tax.
- 2009 Sixth Grade was moved to Kirn and Wilson, which renamed from Junior Highs to Middle Schools, serving 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.
- 2010 Pusey Elementary School closed at the end of the 2009-10 school year and all students were re-

assigned to Longfellow Elementary. The building was leased to Heartland Family Service to serve students enrolled in the Heartland Therapeutic School, which eventually moved to the former 9th Avenue School (former St. Albert's and former DeForest building).

- 2010 College View Elementary School opened at the corner of Valley View Drive and College Road. Name was derived from its location and the fact it is located just off the campus of Iowa Western Community College, so "in view of college" literally.
- 2010 The new Carter Lake Elementary School was opened on the property just west of the former school. The former school was torn down and the land is now used for recreation.
- 2011 Hoover Elementary re-opened after an extensive renovation that re-located students to Washington Elementary for a year.
- 2011 Washington and Gunn Elementary Schools closed at the conclusion of the 2010-11 school year. Students were re-assigned to attend Hoover, Lewis & Clark and Bloomer Elementary Schools.
- 2014-15 Student Enrollment at 9,117
- 2015 Lewis & Clark re-opened as a fully renovated and expanded building, with new entrance, parking and playground. L&C students had attended classes at the former Washington school during the 2014-15 school year.
- 2017 Kaneshville Alternative Learning Center in the former Tinley building was moved mid-year to the former Washington Elementary School at 207

Scott Street. The boiler had failed and could not be turned on for the winter.

- 2018 Voters approved a \$37 million bond (at just over 60%) to renovate Kirn and Wilson Middle Schools, and to purchase and renovate the former Target retail store, located on the property of the Mall of the Bluffs.
- 2018 Former Target retail store at the Mall of the Bluffs was purchased by the District for \$1.9 million and was renovated at a total cost of \$4.4 million, for use as a relocation site to accommodate comprehensive renovation of Kirn and Wilson Middle Schools during the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school year, respectively.
- 2020 Student Enrollment:
- 2020 The Kaneshville/Tinley building is demolished due to dilapidation and potential safety concerns as an unoccupied building
- 2020 Kirn Middle School re-opened after a full-scale renovation, including additions. The project included
- 2021 Wilson Middle School re-opened after a full-scale renovation, including additions. The project included
- 2021 The Madison Campus building was sold to Certified Transmission for \$3 million.